

**ASSEMBLY BILL**

**No. 2563**

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**Introduced by Committee on Veterans Affairs**

February 19, 2016

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An act to amend Section 2695.5 of the Penal Code, relating to veterans.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2563, as introduced, Committee on Veterans Affairs. Veterans: service advocate: correctional facilities.

Existing law establishes the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to oversee the state prison system. Under existing law, the department is required to develop guidance policies relative to the release of veterans who are inmates with the intent to assist them in pursuing claims for federal veterans' benefits, or in establishing rights to any other privilege, preference, care, or compensation provided under federal or state law because of honorable service in the military.

Existing law authorizes a veterans service organization to volunteer to serve as a veterans service advocate at each facility that is under the jurisdiction of the department. Under existing law, the advocate is authorized to develop a veterans economic recidivism prevention plan for each inmate who is a veteran. Existing law defines "veteran" for these purposes as a person who has been discharged from the United States Army, United States Navy, United States Air Force, United States Marine Corps, United States Coast Guard, the Merchant Marine, or the American Red Cross.

This bill would revise the definition of "veteran" for the purposes described above by deleting the reference to the American Red Cross

and including a person who has been discharged from the National Guard of any state.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.  
State-mandated local program: no.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

1     SECTION 1. Section 2695.5 of the Penal Code is amended to  
2     read:  
3     2695.5. For purposes of this article, the following definitions  
4     shall apply:  
5     (a) “Advocate” means a veterans service organization that is  
6     federally certified and has volunteered to serve as a veterans service  
7     advocate pursuant to this article.  
8     (b) “Veteran” means a person who has been discharged from  
9     the United States Army, United States Navy, United States Air  
10    Force, United States Marine Corps, United States Coast Guard,  
11    ~~the Merchant Marine, National Guard of any state, or the American~~  
12    ~~Red Cross.~~ *Merchant Marine.*